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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2388

November 10, 1988

## NOV. 9 CROP HIGHLIGHTS

The following are some highlights of the Nov. 9 crop production report of the U.S. Department of Agriculture: Corn for grain production is forecast at 4.67 billion bushels, up 3 percent from last month, but 34 percent below last year's crop; Sorghum grain production is forecast at 546 million bushels, 26 percent less than in 1987; Soybean production is forecast at 1.51 billion bushels, 21 percent below last year; All cotton production at 14.8 million bales is 1 percent above the 1987 crop.

## USSR CROP ESTIMATE DOWN

The 1988 Soviet grain crop estimate was lowered this month by 5 million tons to 200 million, based on recently announced preliminary yield results from the Ukraine and lower than expected state grain procurements from other major grain producing areas. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, wheat is down by 3 million tons to 88 million and barely down by 2 million to 45.5 million.

## USSR GRAIN IMPORT ESTIMATE INCREASED

Recent large coarse grain purchases and expectations that purchases for the second half of the marketing year will continue heavy have prompted an increase in the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimate of USSR total grain imports to 31 million tons, up 2 million tons from a month ago and only fractionally below the 1987/88 level. The combination of a smaller 1988 USSR coarse grain crop and relatively attractive world corn prices has resulted in heavy USSR corn purchases so far during the 1988/89 marketing year. Coarse grain purchases to date total around 8 million tons with the bulk of the sales calling for delivery before the end of December. The estimate of USSR coarse grain imports for 1988/89 was increased to 17 million tons, which is 3 million higher than a month ago and would be the largest imports since 1984/85.

## WORLD COARSE GRAINS

The world 1988/89 coarse grain production, trade and ending stocks were increased from last month, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. production was increased but foreign production was down, with much of the drop due to a 2-million-ton decrease in USSR output. The forecast Soviet coarse grain imports were raised 3 million tons to 17 million, up 7 million from 1987/88 and the largest since 1984/85. The world trade forecast was raised more than 1 million tons from last month and is 5 million above 1987/88. World ending stocks were raised slightly but are 45 percent below a year earlier.

1987/88 U.S.  
CORN EXPORTS  
AND PRODUCTION

The 1987/88 U.S. corn exports were raised 12 million bushels, based on larger than expected August exports, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. corn production for 1988/89 was raised 118 million bushels. The larger corn production estimate was partially offset by a 75-million-bushel increase in exports. Prospective ending stocks were raised, but remain two-thirds below a year earlier.

WORLD OILSEED  
PRODUCTION  
1988/89

The world oilseed production in 1988/89 is forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 200 million tons, 3 percent below last year's record crop. Foreign oilseed production is forecast at 151.3 million tons, up 4 percent from last year. U.S. production is forecast at 49 million tons, down 19 percent from last year. The forecast price range for soybeans was lowered to \$6.75-\$8.75 per bushel.

SOVIET COTTON  
HARVEST

The Soviet cotton harvest is progressing well. Nearly 7.3 million tons of seed cotton had been harvested by Nov. 4, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

USDA PROPOSES  
NEW INSPECTION  
SYSTEM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing changes in its meat and poultry inspection program to implement a recent law which authorizes USDA to adjust the intensity of inspection among processing plants. The USDA would use records of plant compliance with Federal food safety and processing regulations to determine the frequency of inspection. Under the proposal, USDA would increase inspection at processing plants where records indicate a need for additional oversight. Plants with good records could be visited less than daily. The proposal appeared in the Nov. 4 Federal Register. Send written comments in duplicate until Feb. 2 to: Linda Carey, FSIS Hearing Clerk, USDA, Wash., D.C. 20250.

TEA FOR  
1989

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will allocate \$200 million for the Targeted Export Assistance program for fiscal 1989. This program was authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985. It requires the Secretary of Agriculture to use Commodity Credit Corporation commodities or funds each year through 1990 to provide assistance to U.S. agricultural products to counter or offset the adverse effects of unfair foreign trade practices on exports.

MORE 1989  
FARM PROGRAM  
PROVISIONS

During the 1989 farm program sign-up, producers may declare their intentions to plant from 10-25 percent of each crop's permitted acreage to soybeans or sunflowers while protecting their crop's acreage base history. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, planting intentions under this special provision will be reviewed and the percentage of permitted acreage that may be devoted to additional soybean/sunflower plantings may be adjusted, if necessary. The adjustment would ensure that the price for the 1989 crop of soybeans will not be less than 115 percent, or \$5.49 per bushel, of the prior year's loan rate of \$4.77. The sign-up dates will be announced later.

SUPPLIES OF  
HOLIDAY  
TURKEY & HAM

Shoppers will find adequate supplies of turkey and plenty of ham for the holidays, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prices likely will be higher for turkey and lower for ham than last year.

LOW-FAT, TENDER LAMB Low-fat, tender meat can be produced by raising ram lambs on a high forage diet, according to a five-year study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Young rams fed a test diet of mostly alfalfa were 54 percent leaner and produced rib eye chops with 45 percent more polyunsaturated fats to saturated fats than castrated rams on the same diet. Meat cuts from rams on the forage-based diet also were 18 percent easier to slice than meat from rams fed a standard high-grain diet. Research is continuing to improve tenderness of the high-lean, low-fat rams.

FINAL ERADICATION OF BRUCELLOSIS The countdown is on for the final eradication of swine brucellosis. The eradication program categorizes each state on its level of participation, from states which already are validated brucellosis-free, to states which have not yet entered the program. The belief is that the U.S. will be able to declare itself free of swine brucellosis well before the end of the century.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE AGRICULTURE USA #1641...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Genetic scientists are probably having more problems with negative perceptions of genetic engineering than they are with solving the technical problems of the science. Gary Crawford explores the subject of how the public views the subject of biotechnology and how those views could affect future progress.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1629...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Middle income farmers feeling pressure; Who is buying the farm land?; Australian food show; More farm program provisions announced.

CONSUMER TIME #1121...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) A positive approach to being single; Genetic engineering and the public; Raising turkeys; New meat inspection system proposed; Consumer food poll.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, Nov. 16, Feed outlook, Milk production, World sugar situation; Fri, Nov. 18, Cattle on feed, Catfish production; Mon, Nov. 21, Wheat outlook; Tues, Nov. 22, Crop/weather update, World agricultural situation; Wed, Nov. 23, World tobacco situation, Horticultural exports, Poultry production; Fri, Nov. 25, World dairy situation; Mon, Nov. 28, Cotton and wool outlook; Red meat production.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D  
ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 10D  
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D  
REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D  
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFFMIKE

Mid-November meeting...in Europe of Ag Ministers and U.S. delegation including Secretary Lyng and U.S. Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter could have a major influence on the GATT mid-term review in Montreal. Just one for instance: Secretary Lyng is waiting until after his November 18-19 meetings in Europe to decide whether to trigger a provision in U.S. trade law countering EC's possible ban on hormone treated meat imports. Daily reports...from Montreal will be given by Brenda Curtis on USDA radio's Newsline. TV reports from the GATT meeting will be provided by Lynn Wyvill on our regular satellite program feeds. See the schedule on page 3 for times and transponder. Chairman...of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Wendy Gramm, says electronic trading of futures will be a reality and coexist with pit trading. Says she reads the Commodity Exchange Act as not prohibiting the development, and that CFTC will expeditiously address the proposal. It could greatly simplify farmers getting protection that futures and options can offer.

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Snow and rain...is on the minds of producers in central Illinois. Art Sechrest (WJBC Bloomington) says drought hit the soil deep and that they will be watching every storm this winter for replenishment. We got his name right this time, two e's. Former farm broadcasters...have been elected to Congress. Conrad Burns R-MT to the U.S. Senate (formerly with Northern Ag Network, Billings), and James Lightfoot R-IO 6th Dist (formerly KMA, Shenandoah) re-elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Thanks for the info provided by Layne Beaty, (USDA radio-TV chief, retired). Congratulations to Layne, at the just concluded annual convention he was inducted into the NAFB Hall of Fame. History...10 years ago this column, Herb Plambeck has assembled an array of talent for the Farm City Week cassette. 20 years ago, Don Lerch, ex farm broadcaster, has been named to the 32-member ag committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

  
VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio and Television Division